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£20,000, and reflects great credit on the correct taste of the architect, Mr. Darley.

Before the reign of Edward I. there were no regular courts of Justice nor Inns of Court: the number of Palatinates and Chiefries existing through Ireland, which were governed by the old Brehon-laws, rendered a court of Chancery unnecessary; but an Exchequer was still required. The Brehon laws were of so mild and conciliating a spirit, that a fine (erick) was the only punishment inflicted even for the worst of crimes.

It is manifest that such a system, in those days, must have been liable to infinite abuses, and after an existence of nearly four centuries under the crown of England, the application of them was at length declared to be treasonable, in the 40th of Edward III. by the statute of Kilkenny. The Brehon laws were written in a character called the "Phenian dialect," and the family of Mac Egan alone possessed the secret of decyphering their records, and were in possession of this secret down to the reign of Charles I.—Henry II. is said to have held a court in Dublin, (November, 1172,) but all records or manuscripts relating to it are lost.

The first institution of an Irish Inn of Court took place in the reign of Edward I.: it was called Collet's Inn, and was outside the city walls, where Exchequer-street and George's-street, south, are now built; here also were the superior courts of justice. But, unfortunately, a banditti, from the mountains of Wicklow, watching an opportunity, when the deputy and great part of the military strength were engaged at a distance, entered and plundered the Exchequer, and burned every record. About the same period, both in England and France, a similar attack was made on the Temple, and other public literary establishments.

This obliged the government to remove the seat of justice from without the walls; and the courts were at first appointed to be held in the Castle of Dublin, and then at Carlow. Whilst the Courts and Inns of Law were held in this ambulatory manner, in the reign of Edward III. Sir Robert Preston, Chief Baron of the Exchequer, resigned, for an Inn of Court, his noble mansion, situated where the Royal Exchange now stands, and having a range of offices extending from that to Essex-bridge. On this site Lord Chief Baron Byssie, some years after, built a noble residence, which was taken down, in 1762, to open Parliament-street.

In Preston's Inns the benchers, lawyers, and attorneys had chambers, and for two centuries this Collegiate Society was upheld with dignity. After the death of Sir Robert Preston, the family, which had been honoured by a peerage, in 1478, with the title of Viscount Gormans-town, disputed the claim to the site of Preston's Inn, and the benchers and lawyers were dispossessed. At this time the Courts of Law were held in the Castle of Dublin, which being found inconvenient, the Inns of Court were removed to the dissolved Monastery of Dominicans, called the Monastery of St. Saviour's, where the Four Courts now stand.

In 1542, Henry VIII. assumed, for the first time that any English monarch had done so, the title of King of Ireland, and from the royal founder this society took the denomination of the "King's Inns." It obtained from him grants of land in Michan's parish, &c. besides parliamentary support; and a statute was introduced, obliging each student to reside for two years at an English Inn of Court, to assist in introducing the English practice of law into this kingdom. From this date, the society of King's Inns began to assume importance as a body.

#### OLD FRANK AND HIS STORIES.

NICK NOWLAN, THE NOGGIN WEAVER.

"Well, well, master Thomas, it was the sorry day for me that I told you the first story of the fairies—sure I have never had ease nor peace since; but if I must, I must—so just sit down quietly, and I'll see and rummage my brains for you. Well, then, you must know, when I was a young boy, many an' many a year ago, goin' about the country looking for service, I spent a month or two once with a grand gentleman up the country, that had a mighty quare story told about how the fortune kem into

his family. It was this way, you see:—Once upon a time, one Nick Nowlan, a poor noggin weaver, set off with his sack of noggins, tied by a hay-rope about his middle, to thry an' sell them at a great fair that was in some town there aby Croagh Phadrig, in the county Mayo; and as he had a long way to go, and the weight was ungainly—and, more betoken, the crathur himself was weak and poor wid bad livin', for the poor then wor as badly off every bit as the poor now—God help them, there's little differ betwene them any time—so, for all these raisons, he made his day's journey as short as he could, an' took as many short cuts as lay in his way. Well, as he was dhrawin' nigh to some village, where he intended to pass the night, he bethought that the straight road was a terrible round intirely for a weary man, and so he strucked off into the fields to thry an' reach it afore the night, that was falling so quickly. Well, Sir, he got a bit into the fields, an' wild fields they wor, not all as one as your honour's lawn, or that pyatee field afore us, bless it, and are n't the crops beautiful intirely this saison? So, as I was sayin', he was in the middle of wild fields, an' not a crathur near him, an' the poor Christian's heart began to fail him, when he thought how many in the world wor more than comfortable and him so beggarly an' lonely; so he leant himself down, very sorrowful like, agin the side of a forth that lay in his way, an' set to thinkin', thinkin', until the night closed around him, an' he lost sight of the town, an' couldn't see his way no longer; so he considered 'twas better to take up his night's lodging in the solitary place where he was, than go further an' fare worse, as many a one did, your honour. Well, he fixed himself as comfortable as he could, leaning his back agin the sack of noggins, that was still fast on him, and, in a minute or two, he heard, as he thought, a grate rumblin' inside, and, as it grew louder an' louder, at last the forth opened, and out kem a beautiful crowd of little gentlemen, (the good people, your honour,) running here an' there, just like the boys in Tim Driscoll's whin they're let out; an' one ran here, an' one ran there, cuttin' switches, an' doin' one thing or another—till, where's my horse, says one, an' where's my horse, says another, an' so on it went through the whole of them, an' as fast as they called, sure enough, the horses wor brought, the iligantest horses a young lord ever got across.

"Musha, then," thinks the noggin maker to himself, as soon as he recovered from the surprise—and sure small blame to the crathur to be frekened. 'Musha, then,' thinks he, 'bad cess to the one of yees wants a horse so bad as me, that's walking, on my own wake weary legs, this whole blessed week; an' sure if good horses are to be had for the axin', he'd be the mighty fool intirely that 'ud want one an' be ashamed to thry his luck. So,' says he, easily like, 'where's my horse?'

"My dear, the word was scarce out of his mouth, whin a fine black bull calf cantered betwene his legs, an' hoised him up on his back, noggins an' all.

"Are we all ready?" says he that was at the head ov the gang.

"All," says the crowd.

"Thin, away," says he, 'till I bid you stop.'

"An', sure enough, away they went, and that was the goin' that left the wind behind it—the runnin' at the steeple chase beyant was nothin' to it. You see, there 'ud a church or a three rise up afore them in the distance, an' afore they could know what it was, my dear, 'twas miles behind them; and so they went on, on, sweepin' all afore them, until they kem to a wide river, that you'd think no horse livin', lettin' alone a calf, 'ud offer at—but over it they flew, my jewels, calf an' all; an' as the calf kem to to the other side, the sack of noggins gave such a bang against the poor man's hinder ind, savin' your honour's presence, as amost sent him sprawlin' about the road. Well, he couldn't help looking round at the leap—and sure it was the wonderful leap ov the world—and says he, 'Sweet was your heels, for a calf, but you knocked a sough out of me. Oh, thin, iv I had you at the fair ov Banagher, what a fortune I'd make ov you, ail in a slap; ochone! ochone! but the poor man's luck never comes to him in the right time.'

"My good man," says the head fairy to him, mighty

pompious, 'neither praise nor dispraise till the night's work is over; and, above all things, keep a still tongue in your head, iv you don't want to lose the use of it all out.'

"My dear, the poor man was greatly abashed, to be sure, but determined to keep the fairy's advice in all points. An' in a few minutes more, when they crossed another hundher miles or two, all ov a suddint the head one said, 'Stop.' And as suddint as the word was, the stop was just as suddint, for it sent poor Nick Nowlan, an' his bag of noggins, over the calf's ears, about the road, not being used to hard ridin', poor crathur, especially 'pon such wild cattle.

"Well, my dear, as soon as they stopped, the fairies all gather about their leader, an' began axin' him about what was to be done the night; an' he ups an' tells them—says he,

"'You must know,' says he, 'there's to be a great weddin' to-night, all out, at a farmer's house a short twenty miles from this, and the bride, that's to be, is the beautifullest crathur that ever a fairy cast his eyes or his spells on, an' sure we've the pick ov the world intirely—haven't we, boys?' and they all threw up their caps, and said they had, to be sure, and thin he wint on—'Well,' says he, 'I'm thinkin' she'd be a great addition to us; an' sure iv we lay ourselves out to get her, we can't but succeed, for we're fairies,' says he, 'an' a great an' united people,' says he, 'and whin we're detarmined to have our own way, we must succeed against all odds; won't we, boys?' said he. An', so you see, if they shouted before, they shouted twice as much now, and danced about like wild Indians, till one of the little people knocked his shins agin the noggins, that was lyin' still on the road, by raison of the poor man havin' no one to lift him; and, bedad, he raised such a pillelu about his broken shin, as brought the whole crowd about him, and one kicked the noggin maker, an' another kicked him, an' 'Cock you up with a horse,' says they, 'whin you dunna how to sit one, an' you getting the iligant manageable baste you did—the best in the whole stud.'

"So they kicked, an' they kicked, till they kicked him on his feet agin, and thin they kicked him straddles on the calf, and thin the leader wint on wid his noration; and says he—

"'This is the way yees are to manage the point: whin all the company—and, by all accounts, there's lots ov thim in it—an' whin they're all so coormuck and soft with the dhrink, kissing each other, and shaking hands, and singing songs, and telling stories, all in a breath, and no one minding more nor themselves and their neighbours, an' but few minding that same, we'll whip in through the key-hole, and, by raison of our being invisible, scatter here an' there through the whole house; thin one ov yees will get a sthraw, and stick it up the bride's nose, and if she sneezes the three times, an' no one says, God bless her, thin, boys, she's ours, as sure as a gun, and we'll have her in spite ov all ov thim; so now give three cheers for our success, an' mount an' away, boys.'

"Well, sure, they gave the three cheers, and they were so loud, the only wondher is they worn't heard at the farmer's, far as it was; and thin they all mounted agin, an', afore you could say Jack Robinson, they wor at the door, and it isn't long they staid there either, but in through the keyhole wid them, an' here and there through the house; and where did they cock poor Nick Nowlan, my dear, but up on the collar beam, right over the table. Well, a mighty unaisy seat it was, but sure the sights ov good eatin' and dhrinkin' that was below him, and the grand company, ought to be enough to make any sate pleasant, barrin' it was after a long ride; and there was the bride, so nate and ginteel, wid a rale silk gown on her back, smilin' and blushin', and looking so good humoured at every one; and the vanithee, herself, filling out the tay to the girls, and the man ov the house pressin' the good dhrink on all ov them, men and women; and his raverence himself, sure, keeping them all quiet: but, in truth, he might as well let it alone, for there they were, all jist as the fairy said, dhrinking healths and coortin', and the ould ones shaking hands, and the young ones kissing each other, and such singing of songs and telling

of stories, that you couldn't hear your ears; and there was the bridegroom up by the priest, listening to the good advice, to be sure, an' takin' a dhrop now and thin, and keeping his reverence's cruiskeen full; but still, betune all of thim, no one was minding the bride—she was sitting so quite an' purty by herself, and the crathur's heart leapin' up to her mouth wid joy, an' fear, an' hope, an' every thing. An' thin a lump ov a fairy gets a sthraw, my dear, and sits up on the table fronting her, wid his ugly legs hanging down into her lap; and, as soon as he gets an opportunity, what does he do but sticks the sthraw up her nose, and 'tchecho,' says she, but so delicate that no one minded her, and, by coorse, no one spoke. Well, a minute or two passed, an' he tried his thrick at another opportunity, and, bedad, with the same success; and now the fairies begun all to gather round her, ready to whip her off the minute the third offer 'ud be made; but he was waiting for a good opportunity, not liking to risk so good a windfall, you see, by being in a hurry, and the sorra long he had to wait, for some joke or other the man of the house made set them (as it was only natural, you know,) into such a roar of laughing, that never a one in the crowd, priest and all, could say the words iv they wor to be made kings for thim; an', faix, the lad wid the sthraw didn't miss his opportunity, but poor Nick above, takin' pity on the colleen, that was going, unknownst to herself, from the world and all she liked in it; an', more-over, having no great love or liking for his company, in regard of the thratement he met from them, took courage, and, after gallopin' over a patther an' avy as quick as he could, 'God bless you, amock,' says he, the minute she sneezed for the third and last time.

"Well, my jewel, such a screech as the fairies ruz, whin they found themselves tricked so nately, was never heard afore or since; and while the whole company was staring at each other, not knowing, to be sure, what to make of it, the leader of the fairies makes one hop up to the collar beam, where Nick was sitting above wid his noggins, rubbin' his hands with fair delight.

"'Bad cess to you,' says he, 'you spalpeen, was it to sarve us this trick, and spoil our sport, that you chated us out of the nice drassin' you got; but take this, now,' says he, 'to spoil your ridin'; and wid that he gives him such a kick, in the part that was sore enough afore, as ruz him fair off the collar beam, an' knocked his head against the roof above, and down he cum plop on the table, noggins and all, amost on top of his rav'rince's head. If they were frekened before, to be sure they wor twice as much frekened then, and small blame to them either, for the fall was so great, you see, that it burst the sack and fastenings and all, and the noggins went flyin' about every one's head, puttin' out the candles, overturning the bottles and cruiskeens, and knocking the eyes almost out ov every head they met; up they all got, and run to the door as quick as their legs could carry thim, and there they were, all in a bundle, like as if you shook them out ov a bag—some on their backs, shoutin' millia murther, more on their knees, stuttering through their prayers, and some shouting out their confession to the priest, and begging absolution; but the good man himself was the worst off ov them all, for he got in handy grips with Nick in the dark, and they both rowled about the flure, till, when the priest got up-permost, he made a grab at a fine cruiskeen of smoking hot punch that was near him by the fire, and lashed it fair into the noggin weaver's face, between the two eyes, by way of holy water.

"'Oh, thin,' says the poor fellow, 'is this the way I'm to be thrated? first to be made a foot ball of by an imp ov a fairy, for savin' the bride from him, and thin to be scalded to death by the weddingers.'

"'Why, thin, Nomminy Domminy,' says the priest, lettin' go his hoults, 'who are you at all, at all? I'm blest, but I thought you wor the devil.'

"'Och, who would I be,' says he, 'but poor Nick Nowlan, the noggin weaver, that saved the bride for yees from the fairies, though ye thrate me this way now.'

"Well, my dear, by this time some one lit a candle, an' whin they saw the poor man an' his noggins, to be sure they laughed; and while one put sweet oil on his

face, another put a plaster ov scraped pyatees on it, but between them all he soon had stringth to tell his story, and he upped and he tould them all that happened, and whin they hard it, it's well but they eat the sore face off him with kisses; an' says the bride's father, says he—

“ ‘Why, thin, it shall be no loss to you, Nick Nowlan, to lose the fair, for we'll buy your noggins from you, one a piece, and there's the price of my noggin,’ says he, puttin' a goold guinea into his fist; for the ould people says goold was more plinty when that happened than silver is now, no compare.

“ But the upshot ov the story is, that he got his guinea a-piece for the noggins, and the priest's blessin' into the bargain, and it all thruv wid him, for he bought a little farm, out an' out, an' in time got very rich and married the bride's sister, and lived very comfortable, only that he'd never trust himself acress any baste agin, by raison of his last ride. But, any how, 'twas with his son I was workin', and he was a grate gintleman, sure enough, but, by all accounts, a better horseman nor his father.”

M'C.



THE NATURALIST'S LIBRARY.\*

We have before us another volume of this very pleasing and useful publication. The subject is one which must render it entertaining to the general class of readers, as treating of the numerous varieties of the *Columbidae*, or pigeon-tribe. The descriptions are preceded by an interesting Life of Pliny, the Naturalist, who, we are informed in the Introduction, was descended of a noble family, and born in the reign of Tiberius, in the 20th, or, according to others, the 23d year of the Christian era. The place of his nativity has been disputed, three cities in Italy having contended for that honour. At an early age he was sent to Rome, where he attended the lectures of Appian; and even then his attention was attracted by the interesting productions of nature, and particularly by the remarkable animals which the emperors exhibited in the public spectacles. We learn from himself, that about his twenty-second year he resided for a time on the coast of Africa. It was at this period that some modern writers have alleged, on no very substantial evidence however, that he served in the Roman fleet, and visited Britain, Greece, and some other eastern countries. But these suppositions do not accord with the testimony of his nephew, who asserts that, while yet quite young, he was employed in the Roman armies in Germany. About the age of thirty

Pliny returned to Rome, where he pleaded several causes according to the custom of his countrymen, who were fond of allying the profession of arms with the practice of the bar. It does not appear that he held any official situation, and during the greater part of the reign of Nero, he seems to have remained without any employment from the state. At Rome, Vespasian, with whom he had been on intimate terms during the German wars, gave him a very favourable reception, and was in the habit of calling him to his apartment every morning before sunrise—a privilege which, according to Suetonius and Xiphilinus, was reserved only for his particular friends.

“ What we know of the private character, the vast erudition, and incredible industry of Pliny, is chiefly derived from his nephew, who, from daily and familiar intercourse, had the best opportunities of minute observation. To the same pen we owe the account of his death, the particulars of which are better known than the circumstances of his private life. At the time of that melancholy event, Pliny the Naturalist was at Misenum near Naples, in command of the Roman fleet, which was appointed to guard all the part of the Mediterranean comprehended between Italy, Gaul, Spain, and Africa. The letter containing these interesting details is addressed to the well known historian Tacitus, who, it appears, had expressed to the nephew a wish to be acquainted with the particulars of that catastrophe, that he might mention them in his writings. The narrative is not only intimately connected with the subject of this memoir, but curious in itself, as containing the relation, by an eye-witness, of the first great eruption of Mount Vesuvius on record, by which the cities of Herculaneum and Pompeii were destroyed.

FIRST GREAT ERUPTION OF MOUNT VESUVIUS.

“ Pliny the Elder was at that time with the fleet under his command at Misenum. On the 24th of August, about one in the afternoon, my mother desired him to observe a cloud which appeared of a very unusual size and shape. He had just returned from enjoying the benefit of the sun; and after bathing in cold water, and taking a slight repast, was retired to his study. He immediately rose and went out upon an eminence, from whence he might more distinctly view this singular phenomenon. It was not, at that distance, discernible from what mountain this cloud issued, but it was found afterwards to proceed from Mount Vesuvius. I cannot give you a more exact description of its figure than by comparing it to that of a pine tree, for it shot up a great height in the form of a tall trunk, which spread at the top into a sort of branches; the cause of which was, I imagine, either that the force of the sudden gust which impelled the cloud upwards had decreased in strength as it advanced; or that the cloud being pressed back by its own weight, expanded itself in the manner I have mentioned. It appeared sometimes bright, and sometimes dark and spotted, just as it was more or less impregnated with cinders. This uncommon appearance excited my uncle's philosophical curiosity, to take a nearer view of it. He accordingly ordered a light vessel to be prepared, and offered me the liberty, if I thought proper, to accompany him. I rather chose to continue the employment in which I was engaged; for it happened that he had given me a certain writing to copy. As he was going out of the house, he received a note from the commissary of marines at Retina, who were in the utmost alarm at the imminent danger which threatened them, (for that villa was in the immediate neighbourhood, and there was no means of escape except by sea,) imploring him to rescue them from their perilous situation. He accordingly changed his original intention, and instead of gratifying his philosophical spirit, he resigned it to the more magnanimous principle of aiding the distressed. With this view he ordered the galleys immediately to put to sea, and went himself on board, intending to assist not only Retina, but other villas which stood extremely thick on that beautiful and salubrious coast. Hastening, therefore, to the place from whence others had fled with the utmost terror, he steered his course direct to the point in danger; and with so much calmness and presence of mind, as to be able to make and dictate his observations upon the appearance and progress of that dreadful scene. He was now so near the moun-

\* The Naturalist's Library, conducted by Sir Wm. Jardine, Bart. Ornithology—Vol. V. Gallinaceous Birds—Part III. Pigeons—By Prideaux John Selby, Esq. Edinburgh: Lizars.